



INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
IoBM

Ph.D. Manual

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES (OGS)



Preface

The purpose of the Ph.D. Manual is to provide comprehensive guidance to students and relevant departments, enabling them to navigate the procedural requirements necessary for the successful completion of the Ph.D. degree. Its aim is to streamline the process and ensure clarity for all stakeholders involved. At IoBM, our Ph.D. research program is designed with the objective of fostering cutting-edge research, facilitating the development of innovative ideas, and improving analytical skills. We strive to cultivate an environment that encourages both faculty and students to be independent and creative thinkers.

Doctor of Philosophy (or Ph.D.) is the highest university degree, awarded in most disciplines. Those who qualify at this level, are expected to serve highly consequential functions in the society, including in the fields of teaching and research. With in-depth training and immersion in a particular field of study, which includes making an original contribution to the area of study through the Ph.D. dissertation, those holding Ph.D. degrees are expected to have expertise in their area of study that they can utilize in teaching and further research, as well as in problem-solving and innovation to address important societal challenges.



TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Admission to a Ph.D. Degree Program	4
2. Coursework Requirement for Award of Ph.D. Degree:	4
3. Comprehensive Examination:	4
4. Comprehensive Guidelines:	5
5. Ph.D. Degree Completion Timeline:	5
6. Re-admission and Credit Transfer for Ph.D. Degree:	6
7. Ph.D. Dissertation Requirements:	6
8. Guideline for Proposal Writing and Defense:	7
i. Selection of Research Area	7
ii. Quality of Reporting	7
iii. Methodology Quality	8
iv. Appropriateness of the Methods to the Aims of the Study	8
v. Relevance to the Policy and Practice	9
vi. <i>External Evaluation of Ph.D. Dissertation:</i>	9
vii. <i>Plagiarism and Similarity Test:</i>	9
viii. <i>Research Publication:</i>	10
ix. <i>General Guidelines:</i>	10
9. Ph.D. Dissertation Template and General Guidelines:	10
i. Ph.D. Dissertation Guidelines	10
ii. The Ordering of Items for the Dissertation	11
iii. Font and Font Size:	11
iv. Line spacing in the Text:	11
v. Citation /Reference Style:	12
vi. References:	12
vii. Chapters Title Heading and Subheading:	12
viii. Margins, Physical Layout and Pagination:	12
ix. Declaration:	12
x. Dissertation Binding Template:	12
xi. Electronic Version:	12
xii. Plagiarism Check:	13
xiii. Selection of External Evaluations and Defense Examiner by BASR:	13
xiv. Evaluation of Ph.D. Dissertation:	13
xv. Open Defense of Ph.D. Dissertation:	13
xvi. Open Defense of Ph.D. Dissertation Protocol:	14



1. Admission to a Ph.D. Degree Program

- **Basic Academic Qualification:** Eighteen years of schooling or Equivalent shall be required for admission in the Ph.D. program.
- **Minimum CGPA/Division:** For admission in Ph.D. programs, a minimum CGPA of 3.0 (out of 4.0 in the semester system) or 60% (in the annual system) in the MS/MPhil/equivalent degree being considered for admission, is required, whether such degree was obtained from Pakistani or foreign universities.
- **Admission Test:** Minimum 60% cumulative Score in GAT-Subjective.
- **Interview:** Successfully pass an interview conducted by the IoBM Interview/Admission Committee.
- **Intra-Disciplinary¹ Qualifications:**
Consistent with best practices internationally (including leading global universities), intradisciplinary admissions may only be allowed, if:
 - i. The university/HEI policy allows, and
 - ii. The applicant has a strong interest in pursuing a Ph.D. in a different discipline.
 - iii. The applicant has passed GRE-Subject/Equivalent Test with minimum 50% marks in the discipline of admission and has taken 6-9 CH of deficiency courses of level 7.
 - iv. The admission committee is satisfied that the applicant's knowledge of the primary area (level 7) has sufficiently prepared him or her to undertake the course of study of the doctoral program (or, in the opinion of the admissions committee, the preparation can be deemed satisfactory by taking a few additional courses after starting the program.

2. Coursework Requirement for Award of Ph.D. Degree:

- The following requirements shall be fulfilled before the award of a Ph.D. Degree:
The students shall complete the coursework of at least:
 - i. 18 credit hours if they are from the same discipline.
 - ii. The courses shall be offered through regular classes (i.e., classes taught on campus by full-time faculty members of the university)
 - iii. The courses shall preferably be of 800 level.
 - iv. Ph.D. degree should be based on research, not only on credit hours.

3. Comprehensive Examination:

- i. Following the completion of coursework, every Ph.D. student shall be required to pass the comprehensive examination to be granted candidacy as a Ph.D. researcher, with the provision that the student failing to pass the comprehensive exam, shall be allowed to retake the exam once.

¹ According to HEC Graduate Education Policy 2023, Intradisciplinary refers to sub-disciplines occurring within one of the ten broad disciplines defined by UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-F-2013).



- ii. The required coursework, comprehensive exam, and defense of synopsis/research proposals should be completed within the 1st six semesters of the registration into a Ph.D. program. The responsibility in this regard rests collectively with the Ph.D. student and the university. In case of noncompliance, the registration shall be cancelled and transcripts for completion of coursework may be issued to the student.
- iii. In an event of force majeure i.e., noncompliance on account of circumstances beyond the control of student, the institute may consider the matter in accordance with the procedure prescribed at 3 (iv).
- iv. The following are the guidelines for a conducting Comprehensive Examination:
 - a. The exam shall be based on recapitulation of the conceptual knowledge of the discipline to which the student is admitted.
 - b. The exam shall cover the courses studied, preferably at the graduate level, conducted on one composite question paper.
 - c. The evaluation shall be on an aggregate basis, expressed in terms of pass/fail and shall not be graded.

4. Comprehensive Guidelines:

The purpose of comprehensive exam is not to test the memory recall of the concepts learned during the course work, but to evaluate the ability to analyze a given problem and be able to design solutions based on established theories and models.

Format:

- The format is designed to evaluate the ability of the students to apply the theories and models learned during the Ph.D. coursework and would be communicated well in advance to the test.
- Paper would be based on the theories studied by the student at the Ph.D. level.
- The paper may include question(s) regarding evaluation and application of theories of at least 10 given research papers to a problem.
- Comprehensive Exam will be open book and may last up to 5-8 hours depending up on the program.

5. Ph.D. Degree Completion Timeline:

- i. The duration of the PhD program is from 3 to 8 years.
- ii. The Ph.D. degree shall be awarded not before the completion of three years or six regular semesters and not after completion of eight years or 16 regular semesters, save exceptions mentioned at clause 3 (iv).
- iii. The completion date of Ph.D. degree shall be reckoned with the date of notification of the award of Ph.D. degree.
- iv. The maximum duration shall be determined from the date of student enrollment until the date of the completion notification of the Ph.D. degree.
- v. In case a student is unable to secure a Ph.D. degree within the prescribed timeframe and claims for extension in duration, the institute may constitute appropriate authority



and determine the causes for delay. In event of force majeure i.e., delay on account of circumstance beyond the control of student, the university may grant an extension in the period of award of Ph.D. degree in accordance with the duration limiting factor(s) and shall also take corrective measures in case the delay is caused due to process or administrative reasons.

6. Re-admission and Credit Transfer for Ph.D. Degree:

- If the student exceeds the maximum duration of the program then he/she may apply for the readmission as per IoBM Readmission Policy.
- Readmission is contingent upon the Institute's discretion, which is determined based on the recommendation of the Credit Equivalent and Transfer Committee (CETC) of IoBM. While students may express their interest in readmission, the final decision lies with the Institute, considering various factors evaluated by the committee.
- In case of credit transfer from another university, IoBM's Credit Equivalent and Transfer Committee (CETC) will assess and evaluate the transfer of credits between educational institutes and programs.

7. Ph.D. Dissertation Requirements:

- Successfully complete the prescribed coursework, each with a credit hour value of 03.
- Select a supervisor from within the university/institute in accordance with HEC requirements.
- Pass a comprehensive Exam.
- Write a Ph.D. proposal following the IoBM Ph.D. Template under the guidance of a supervisor.
- Successfully defend the Ph.D. proposal in an open defense.
- BASR Approval of Ph.D. Proposal.
- Satisfactory semester-wise research progress report will be maintained by the supervisor.
- Complete total 48 credit hours of Ph.D. coursework and dissertation.
- Publication of at least one research paper based on the Ph.D. research in an HEC approved journal is a requirement for the award of Ph.D. degree (as per IoBM Research Publication policy).
- Final dissertation submission to BASR.
- Evaluation of Dissertation by 02 Evaluators from technological advanced countries and approval by BASR.
- If the dissertation is rejected by one of the evaluators, it will be sent to a third evaluator.
- Finalize the dissertation based on the comments/changes provided by the evaluator/s.
- Present a dissertation defense in the presence of an external examiner and a committee consisting of a supervisor (as an observer), relevant MS/PhD/HoD/program coordinator, Dean, one subject expert, and OGS.



- The process of dissertation finalization entails carefully considering and incorporating any comments/changes provided by the examiners while ensuring compliance with the designated IoBM format.
- Submit soft copies in two CDs and a minimum of five hard copies including; Library, concerned Dean's Office/Research HoD, Supervisor, OGS, and Student, according to the IoBM Ph.D. Template.
- Complete the student's file along with all required forms/documents signed by the relevant authorities.
- The Ph.D. dissertation cover should be in the “Black” color.
- The Degree Award Letter is issued after the completion of all HEC and IoBM requirements (Form Checklist).
- Submission of online PCD form provided on HEC website.

8. Guideline for Proposal Writing and Defense:

Each Ph.D. researcher shall write a dissertation reflecting relevance, credibility, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the research. The thesis must be an original and innovative contribution to knowledge that contributes to solving socio-economic problems. To improve quality of a Ph.D. dissertation, some regulations are suggested for the students in the following areas:

i. Selection of Research Area

The research area of the Ph.D. researcher must:

- Corresponds to the community needs at regional and local levels and comply with the priority.
- National research agenda.
- Reflects the basic and pure research.
- Signifies emerging areas of research that coincide with Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs).

ii. Quality of Reporting

The quality of presentation and reporting in dissertation shall reflect following characteristics:

- The document is well written.
- The contents are balanced, well organized, appropriately styled; clearly structured, and well cohered.
- The document is free from grammatical and spelling errors and flawed terminology.
- Minor shortcomings such as inaccurate use of acronyms and clumsy looking sentence structure has been cared for.
- Quantitative research proposals are required to include a valid statistical design for analysis of data.
- The formatting shall be compatible to international standards.



iii. Methodology Quality

To produce Ph.D. dissertation capable of conducting research independently, ensuring technical soundness of their Ph.D. dissertation is integral. Following guidelines shall be useful to make the Ph.D. research methodologically sound:

- **Guidelines ensuring the quality of Qualitative Research:**

A Ph.D. research thesis, based on the Qualitative Research methods should satisfy, at least, the following questions:

- a. Does the research, as reported, illuminate the subjective meaning, actions and contexts of those being researched?
- b. Is there evidence of the adaption and responsiveness of the research design to the circumstances and issues of real-life social settings met during the course of the study?
- c. Does the sample produce the type of knowledge necessary to understand the structures and processes within which the individuals or situations are located?
- d. Is the description provided detailed enough to allow the researcher or reader to interpret the meaning and context of what is being researched?
- e. How are the different sources of knowledge about the same issue compared and contrasted?
- f. Are subjective perceptions and experiences treated as knowledge in their own right?
- g. How does the research move from a description of the data through quotation or examples, to an analysis and interpretation of the meaning and significance of it?

- **Guidelines Ensuring the Quality of Quantitative Research:**

A Ph.D. dissertation with Quantitative Research methods should satisfy, at least, the following questions:

- a. Reliability – are the results repeatable?
- b. Validity – does it measure what it says it does?
- c. Internal validity – do the research results mean what they appear to?
- d. External validity – can the results be generalized to other settings (ecological validity)
- e. and to other populations (population validity)?
- f. Replicability – are the results of the study reproducible?

iv. Appropriateness of the Methods to the Aims of the Study

To achieve research objectives, alignment of research approach-methods is necessary.

Therefore, a Ph.D. dissertation at least:

- a. Reflect a fair proportion of latest knowledge of contemporary techniques and methods in relation to study objectives.
- b. Contain detailed and easily comprehensible discussions regarding the applied methods and techniques.



- c. Justify the use of methods and techniques to achieve study objectives.
- d. Show evaluation of obtained results in relation with study objectives.
- e. The methods and techniques used should justify the results obtained.
- f. The obtained results should support the study objectives.

v. ***Relevance to the Policy and Practice***

The research should have significantly answered the questions related to policy and practice in that area establishing its usefulness and usability. Accordingly, an Ph.D. dissertation at least:

- a. Reflect judicious evaluation of study results in relation with policy related aims and goals undertaken while starting the research.
- b. Discuss the practical implications of the study results in association with the developing practices in that area.
- c. Establish usefulness of the study results for devising policy as stated in the beginning.
- d. discuss that how would the resulting policy be useful for organization/society.
- e. The study output should be significant enough to be published or to be patented.
- f. The assessment of the results performed by the author must not be superficial and lacks substance.

vi. ***External Evaluation of Ph.D. Dissertation:***

A Ph.D. dissertation must be evaluated by:

- At least two external experts who shall be PhD faculty member from the world top 500 universities ranked by the Times Higher Education or QS World Ranking in the year corresponding to dissertation evaluation year.

vii. ***Plagiarism and Similarity Test:***

- Under no circumstances shall a dissertation based on plagiarized research be acceptable. It is the primary responsibility of both Ph.D. researchers and their supervisors to prevent plagiarism.
- Originality/Similarity reports generated by the Turnitin, provides clues in the form of text matches, Proverbs, Universal Truths, phrases etc. Scholars/Students must make sure that the document they are submitting is in a required documenting style (i.e. IEEE, Chiacago, MLA, APA etc.), as per Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) guidelines and is free of plagiarism.
- If the document has a similarity index $\leq 19\%$, then benefit of doubt may be given to the author but, in case, any single source has similarity index $\geq 5\%$ without citation, then it needs to be revised/corrected.
- It is important to note that too much quoted material is not desired as per policy and Turnitin tool gives warning if submitted material has more than 15% quoted material, which is alarming and not accepted.



viii. *Research Publication:*

- For Science (HEC Impact Factor X Category Journal and above), and for Social Sciences (HEC Impact Factor Y Category Journal and above).

ix. *General Guidelines:*

- The student will use the proposal template provided on website to write the proposal.
- After the proposal has undergone a Turnitin check, the supervisor will forward the proposal to the Ph.D. Coordinator/HoD using the Form 4.1 Ph.D. Proposal Defense Requisition Form in both hard and soft copies of the proposal.
- Once the Ph.D. proposal has been reviewed and deemed compliant with the general guidelines, including permissible limits for similarity index, format, and other requirements, the announcement of the proposal defense date will be made by the respective Ph.D. program Coordinator/HoD. This date will be mutually agreed upon by the relevant expert/panel.
- The composition of the review committee will be determined based on the relevance of the research area, with the consent of the supervisor, HoD/Dean.
- At least one week prior to the proposal defense, an official notification will be issued by the Ph.D. Program Coordinator/HoD to inform the students, supervisor, review committee, Dean, and OGS-Office.
- The Proposal defense sessions are scheduled exclusively on Saturdays, with a suitable time slot from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM.
- In the event that changes are recommended by the defense committee during the Proposal defense, the candidate is responsible for incorporating these changes into their research work.
- After making the necessary revisions, the candidate must obtain approval from the relevant HoD/Dean. This approval process requires certifying the changes from the relevant supervisor before submitting the revised proposal to the OGS-Office.
- Once the proposal has received approval from the committee, it will be forwarded to the Board of Advanced Studies Research (BASR) for further consideration. (Form 4.2 BASR Proposal sample).

9. Ph.D. Dissertation Template and General Guidelines:

i. *Ph.D. Dissertation Guidelines*

- The word limit for Ph.D. dissertation should be between 50,000 to 70,000 with 1.5 space. Footnotes, references and text within tables are not counted within the word limit. (*Appendices and Bibliographies are also excluded*).
- APA (Business Management and Social Sciences) and IEEE (IT and Engineering)
- Reference/Citation style to be followed.
- Font Style: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 12



- Spacing: 1.5
- Running Head: Left
- Paragraphs (First Line) Indented
- Page Number: Bottom Centre
- Short Title: Upper right
- Page Format: 1" (Bottom) 1" (Top) 1.5" left and 1.0" Right
- Upto 5 Levels of Heading (i.e. 1, 1a, 1b, 1c, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3)
- Alignment: (Justified)
- Spine: Last name of the author with the first name initial and year
- Cover Color for Ph.D. dissertation: Black

ii. *The Ordering of Items for the Dissertation*

- Title Page [MS/MPhil & PhD Thesis/Dissertation Template]
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgment (any special assistance given should be stated)
- Author's Declaration
- Plagiarism Undertaking
- Forwarding Sheet
- Certificate of Approval
- Notification
- Examination Report
- Table of Content
- List of Tables
- List of figures
- List of terms, symbols or abbreviations (if any)
- Abstracts
- The body of Text [chapter 1 to Chapter 5/6]
- Endnote (if any)
- References
- Bibliography (if required)
- Annexures/Appendices (if any)

iii. *Font and Font Size:*

- Times New Roman font to be used
- Font size 12 for the text of the Thesis
- Font size for title page 18-22
- Font size 14 for Heading 1, for Heading 2 "12" and for text "12"
- Condensed type is not acceptable

iv. *Line spacing in the Text:*

- The space between rows of text should be 1.5 lines.



v. ***Citation /Reference Style:***

- Reference should be made to the publication manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 6th Edition and later, and for IT and Engineering Departments IEEE referencing style is required.

vi. ***References:***

- The references list should cite all the literature referred to in the text of the dissertation.

vii. ***Chapters Title Heading and Subheading:***

- Headings should be single line spaced.
- Each chapter should begin on a new page.

viii. ***Margins, Physical Layout and Pagination:***

- For the purpose of Binding, a minimum of “1” inch margin is required for all sides of page. This is applicable for all pages.
- The page number should be printed at the bottom of the page and centered and should be approximately three-quarter of an inch from the page’s edge.
- All pages shall be numbered in sequence. There should be no blank or duplicated pages.
- All sections before the main text, including the preface are numbered in small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.).
- The main text onwards including Abstract, Chapter pages, Illustration, Figures, Tables, Reference and Appendices/Annexures should be numbered in consecutive order in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3)

ix. ***Declaration:***

- The declaration should include if any material contained in the dissertation has been used before and that the main text of the dissertation is an original work. The declaration immediately follows the acknowledgment and must be signed by the candidate.

x. ***Dissertation Binding Template:***

- Black color with embossed gold lettering IoBM logo to be printed on the dissertation.

xi. ***Electronic Version:***

- The Institute of Business Management (IoBM) requires electronic submission of the dissertation in 2 CD’s, to be kept by the relevant department/Library and for the copyright. The document should be in PDF format. No compression or password protection should be employed. It is



the author's responsibilities to ensure that the PDF version of the thesis matches for the completeness and fidelity with the print version of the dissertation.

xii. Plagiarism Check:

- The thesis will be checked through the Turnitin twice. First at the time of sending it for the evaluation, and second after the open defense before sending the case to BASR for the approval of Degree by the IoBM Focal Person.

xiii. Selection of External Evaluations and Defense Examiner by BASR:

- The supervisor and the HoD are supposed to propose the names of at least 6 PhD experts - Four Evaluators (from Technological Advanced Countries) and 2 Defense Examiners (as per HEC Policy) on the subject area to be submitted to BASR for the Approval. (Form 8.1 Examiners/Evaluators Form).

xiv. Evaluation of Ph.D. Dissertation:

- The evaluation expected time is 4 weeks. The remainders are supposed to go to the evaluators after 4 weeks.
- If the evaluators are not responding within the given time, in that case OGS is authorized by the BASR to send the dissertation to the other evaluator for review from the provided list for approval.

xv. Open Defense of Ph.D. Dissertation:

- A student shall proceed for an open defense after submitting the changes (if any) suggested by the evaluators. These changes are supposed to be verified and certified by the relevant supervisor, HoD, Dean and submitted to OGS-Office for further process.
- After receiving the changes certificate and dissertation (if any), OGS-Office then officially will send the dissertation to the Defense Examiner for review and the invitation for the defense.
- The Ph.D. dissertation defense date has to be decided with the availability of the defense examiner by communicating the IoBM defense conduct scheduled policy.
- The existing students of the relevant Ph.D. programs must attend the defense and attendance should be maintained by the coordinators.
- Ph.D. dissertation open defense evaluation form (Open Defense Form 9.1) to be submitted to the Defense examiner by the relevant Ph.D. Coordinator.
- The sealed defense examiner report will then be presented to the BASR members for Degree approval, In-case of changes suggested by the defense examiner, the student must incorporate the changes and take the approval



from a relevant supervisor, HoD, Dean and submit to OGS-Office for resending the case to BASR for Degree Approval.

- Final thesis will be sent to IoBM Turnitin Focal Person for the official check of similarity.

xvi.

Open Defense of Ph.D. Dissertation Protocol:

- In accordance with HEC Policy, the defense is required to be conducted in an open manner.
- Advance notice should be provided to ensure timely communication of the defense schedule.
- Supervision of the proceedings shall be maintained by either the HOD/relevant Dean/Coordinator or OGS/Rep.
- Attendance at the defense is mandatory for both pertinent research students and faculty members.
- Questioning will take place subsequent to the presentation's conclusion.
- Initial inquiries may arise from the audience, succeeded by faculty members, and ultimately, the examiner, with no set limit on the number of queries.
- During the defense, the supervisor's role is solely that of an observer.
- The defense proforma must be completed, signed by the relevant committee members, and submitted to the Ph.D. Coordinator/HoD/OGS.